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PREFACE.

We present herein the first-fruits of an orienting study of some of the more fundamental problems of feeble-mindedness. Rarely has the problem of feeble-mindedness been attacked fundamentally for its own sake. Yet in recent years and in the immediate present the representatives of numerous and varied interests clamor for light upon what appear the limiting problems of their special fields. But what can the workers in feeble-mindedness as such and for its own sake say to

a) the *educators*, responsible for "laggards," truants, "terrors," "exceptionals," "ungraded," specially graded, retarded, and backward children;

b) the *court authorities*, to whom the educators' problems in part drift and figure as psychopathic cases, defective delinquents, prostitutes, and the like;

c) the *social workers*, sometimes over-ready to tar all these cases with the same brush as "mental";

d) the *eugenists*, who either as Galtonians or as Mendelians, often tend to treat as units and thought-counters all sorts of feeble-mindedness and perhaps even epilepsy under a single caption;

e) the generalizing *biologists*, with their counsel of perfection in the guise of sterilization of the potential parents of more feeble-minded;

f) the *syphilographers* and *antialcoholists*, who need facts for their propagandas and at any rate must not universalize what facts are obtainable;

g) the *legislators* and alert guardians of the public purse, who are promised, in lieu of impractical sterilization, a program of segregation — What can the workers in feeble-mindedness offer to all these inquirers?

Satisfied for the moment with an astonishing and unfamiliar publicity, the special workers in feeble-mindedness shortly turn to fundamentals. Assured in our own minds that not all school "problems" are feeble-minded, that not all delinquents are defective, that not all feeble-minded are institutional subjects, that Pearson and Davenport should not lump and unify so medically obvious a *pot-pourri* as feeble-mindedness, that sterilization is a program whose first physiological lines have not been laid down, that syphilis and alcohol have not had their shares demarcated in the matter of feeble-mindedness,

and that legislators rush in where specialists find no footway, we run to our books. Mierzejewski, Bourneville, Hammarberg, Wilmarth, Tredgold, Bolton, these and others have done their part, perhaps most notably Bourneville. Even Germany has little to offer in the fundamentals, save perhaps the suggestions of the lamented Alzheimer. The great foundations have neglected feeble-mindedness (there is grim humor in the fact that their proposals will often come to naught through the existence of these very feeble-minded whom the great foundations neglect!).

Yet it is not merely the present-day neglect of fundamentals in feeble-mindedness that justifies our undertaking. Other sciences have advanced in the meantime. What would not the modern ideas of glandular dysfunction have meant to Bourneville? How Hammarberg would have rejoiced had the modern work of the cortex-topographers enabled him to omit a large part of his monograph and rush on to deeper studies in feeble-mindedness? How Wilmarth would have enjoyed the resources of a modern laboratory!

These considerations have been set forth more extensively, though still too briefly, in Article I. Here we wish to say that we are minded to present a series of studies of the anatomy, and especially of the brain anatomy, of the feeble-minded (including idiots, imbeciles, and a variety of subnormals under that general term) to which we set the provisional terminus of fifty cases. Until we have presented at least fifty cases from an identical point of view, we feel that we shall hardly be warranted in drawing conclusions. Still, epicritical remarks will be in order with each group of ten cases presented. We plan to present perhaps ten cases a year. The great foundations aforesaid, which have so neglected the topic, might of course speed up the work appreciably; yet it must be granted that every case of feeble-mindedness is so much a unique, not to say Argus-eyed, a problem that speeding-up by funds alone is hardly a practical policy. More living brains are needed to work out the problems of the brains of feeble-minded, whether living or dead — but *cadit quaestio*, that is the urgent lack of mental hygiene as a whole.

We must accord due credit and extend our thanks to the various clinical and post mortem observers who have rendered the work possible, especially to the Waverley School workers, to Dr. Myrtelle M. Canavan of the Pathological Service of the Massachusetts Commission on Mental Diseases, who has performed most of the recent autopsies, and to Dr. Annie E. Taft, Custodian of the Neuropathological Collection, Harvard Medical School, who has been charged with much of the brain analysis. We should not omit to call attention to the excellence of the photographic work of Mr. Herbert W. Taylor, Of great importance also is the work of the technicians, among whom we may mention Miss Ellen R. Scott and Miss Mae Cameron.

Perhaps the most interesting endeavor in the present volume is the attempt to match

brain complexity with mental capacity. To say nothing of the mind-and-brain problem (the less mind, the less brain, and *vice versa*, where "less" is taken not *too* quantitatively), we feel that the whole problem of "mental tests," now *sub judice*, needs anatomical support and anatomical critique. Various authorities glibly discard all "tests"—mind cannot be measured, that is an *à priori* certainty! Other persons, chiefly of the bureaucratizing group, would let fly at the institutions cases "feeble-minded" by a Binet-Simon fraction, particularly if they be antisocial and affected by symptoms never considered by Binet and Simon. The epicritical remarks of the present volume, provisional in character, are therefore levelled at the question of *matching testable mind with measurable brain*. The situation appears on the whole rather favorable. On the basis of the clinical and anatomical details of Article II, Article III goes on to the more doubtful matter of evaluation. The skeptical may confine their attentions to Articles I and II.

A second volume, dealing with Cases XI to XX (including also "Mongolians"), is within hail. Therein we hope to deal still further with the major problems herein touched, such as

- a) the correlation of mental and cerebral measurements.
- b) the theoretically preventable group, (e. g. syphilitic, post-poliomyelitic).

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WALTER E. FERNALD,
E. E. SOUTHARD,
Editors.